



U.S. Chamber of Commerce  
Foundation

1615 H Street, NW, Washington, DC 20062-2000  
[uschamberfoundation.org](https://uschamberfoundation.org)

# Statement of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation

Questions for Ms. Meredith M. Lozar  
Executive Director, Programs and Events  
Hiring Our Heroes, U.S. Chamber of Commerce  
Foundation

Questions from Ranking Member Hice  
Subcommittee on Government Operations  
December 1, 2021, Hearing:  
“The Future of Federal Work”

1. The Building the Next Generation of Federal Employees Act, H.R. 6104, proposes the increased use of paid internships and fellowships, with the potential for non-competitive hiring thereafter, to accelerate the hiring of young federal workers, especially those with mission-critical skills.
  - a. Do you believe Congress should also consider programs and policies such as those in H.R. 6104 for military spouses?
    - i. Yes, I believe considering policies such as those in H.R. 6104 for military spouses can increase economic opportunity for this chronically underemployed population and help the federal government meet workforce modernization needs and goals.
    - ii. Hiring Our Heroes' Military Spouse Fellowship Program provides military spouses with paid internship opportunities that yield an 86% permanent placement rate, making them a highly successful way for spouses to help employers' meet workforce needs and secure employment.
  - b. To the extent any of the programs and policies in H.R. 6104 have not already been established for veterans, do you think they also should be made available for veterans?
    - i. Yes, I believe they should also be made available to veterans to the extent they have not already been established.
    - ii. Each year, thousands of transitioning service members and veterans seek internship opportunities through Skillbridge and Fellowship programs. Hiring Our Heroes' Corporate Fellowship Program has a 90% permanent placement rate, making similar internship opportunities a highly successful way to maintain low veteran unemployment rates and support federal workforce modernization needs and goals.
  - c. Based on your knowledge of hiring through internship and fellowship programs in the private and public sectors, what features of such programs would be best to include additionally or differently in a bill such as H.R. 6104?
    - i. At Hiring Our Heroes, we typically see that a 12-week fellowship is an ideal amount of time for both employers and fellows. This allows for enough time for employers to see the work that the fellow can execute, and it gives the fellows enough time to get a sense of the company's culture, values, and day-to-day work. All of this helps fellows to ultimately evaluate if they want to work for the company long-term. All that said, a fellowship of up to six months could be helpful in some cases.
    - ii. This amount of time for fellowships would be different from what is spelled out in H.R. 6104, given that both fellowships and internships in the bill would have to be at least a year and no more than two years.
  - d. What features should be avoided?
    - i. Features that should be thoughtfully included are to ensure military spouse interns have adequate leave or time off for military-connected situations. Additionally, it is important to ensure that the fellowship and internships avoid requirements that do not allow for telework and remote work policies.
2. Presidents Bush and Trump issued a number of executive orders regarding noncompetitive hiring of military spouses.
  - a. If the federal government is going to pursue more arrangements for telework and remote work, are there additional policy steps we can pursue specifically to incentivize the hiring of military spouses?
    - i. In cases where the job allows for remote and/or telework (whether partial or full telework), prioritizing qualified military spouses is beneficial to increasing their economic opportunity.
    - ii. Additionally, incorporating education about military spouse talent into applicable training for both hiring managers and interview panels is also valuable. This is important because military spouses bring varied professional experience to their roles, much of which is often gained through volunteer opportunities. Educating hiring managers on what to look for when considering military spouse hires increases their success rate and brings highly qualified talent to the federal workforce.